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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/682,422	08/31/2001	John Joseph DiEnno	9D-DW-19893	7785
23465 7590 10/31/2007 JOHN S. BEULICK C/O ARMSTRONG TEASDALE, LLP ONE METROPOLITAN SQUARE SUITE 2600 ST LOUIS, MO 63102-2740			EXAMINER HANSEN, JAMES ORVILLE	
			ART UNIT 3637	PAPER NUMBER
			MAIL DATE 10/31/2007	DELIVERY MODE PAPER

**Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.**

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

**Office Action Summary**

Application No.

09/682,422

Applicant(s)

DIENNO ET AL.

Examiner

James O. Hansen

Art Unit

3637

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 13 August 2007.

2a) ☐ This action is FINAL.

2b) ☒ This action is non-final.

3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

4) ☒ Claim(s) 1,3-7 and 9-21 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) 3,6 and 10-20 is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.

6) ☒ Claim(s) 1,4,5,7,9 and 21 is/are rejected.

7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.

8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:

1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.

3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

**Attachment(s)**

1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)

2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)

3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)

Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_

4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)

Paper No(s)/Mail Date. \_\_\_\_\_

5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application

6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**DETAILED ACTION**

***Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114***

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on August 13, 2007 has been entered.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112***

2. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:
- The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.
3. Claims 1, 4, 5, 7, 9 & 21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. In Claims 1 & 7, the claims as presently amended are unclear and confusing since it is not known how the "plurality of formations" define a retaining slot and yet comprise a plurality of ribs that extend into the slot. It appears that other elements need to be established [as noted in the previous Final office action] in order to clarify the scope of the limitation since a rib can be included as one of the "plurality of formations". In Claims 4 & 9, the phrase "said lip" does not have a proper antecedent basis. Consequently, the remaining claims are rejected since they are dependent upon an indefinite claim.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. Claims 1, 4, 5, 7, 9 & 21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sulcek [U.S. Patent No. 4,478,465] in view of Vogler [U.S. Patent No. 5,625,969]. Sulcek (figures 1-4) teaches of an "escutcheon" for an appliance door assembly, the escutcheon comprising: a front edge and a rear edge horizontally spaced from the front edge, the front and rear edges vertically depending from an escutcheon upper surface; a control panel mounting portion comprising a mounting surface and a lower edge, the control panel mounting portion extending upwardly and inwardly from the lower edge and between the front and rear edges, the control panel mounting portion including a plurality of inherent openings there through; and a plurality of formations downwardly from the lower edge defining a retaining slot configured to receive a panel, the formations comprising a lip and a flange spaced from the lip to define the retaining slot, the flange extending at an acute angle with respect to the lip, the retaining slot configured to receive an upper edge of the panel on the appliance [see Exhibit C – previously submitted with the last Final office action]. The position is taken that Sulcek teaches the claimed limitations in the same manner that applicant discloses, as best understood, in view of the disclosure as originally filed wherein the formation(s) consists of a continuous lip (228) with a flange/guide surface (230) forming a slot (232). Sulcek does not show the incorporation of positioning ribs

extending into the retaining slot. Vogler (figures 1-5) is cited as an evidence reference to show that it was known in the panel securing art to utilize positioning ribs (R) within a retaining slot (fig. 3) for the purpose of securing a panel (P) within the slot. Accordingly, the position is taken that it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the device of Sulcek so as to incorporate positioning ribs as taught by Vogler because this arrangement would provide Sulcek with a means to insure a tight secure engagement of the upper margin of the plate within the retaining slot [note Vogler – col. 5 lines 15-27].

### ***Response to Arguments***

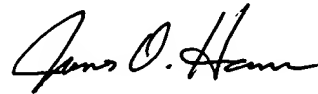
6. Applicant's arguments with respect to the claims have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

### ***Conclusion***

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to James O. Hansen whose telephone number is 571-272-6866. The examiner can be reached on Monday-Friday between 8-4:30 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Lanna Mai can be reached on 571-272-6867. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.



James O. Hansen  
Primary Examiner  
Art Unit 3637

JOH  
October 26, 2007